

Message Text

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21

ACTION ARA-10

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R 051800Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3434

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2947

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MX

SUBJECT: UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS; PROSPECTS FOR CONFRONTATION

1. IN VARIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH GOM OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH UNDOCUMENTED MIGRATION QUESTION, EMBOFFS HAVE OBTAINED IMPRESSION THAT MEXICAN STRATEGY FOR NEXT MONTH'S MEETING OF TWIN COMMISSIONS ENTAILS AN UNPLEASANT AMOUNT OF POSTURING AND RHETORIC FOR PUBLIC RECORD. IN PARTICULAR, DR. JORGE BUSTAMANTE OF COLEGIO DE MEXICO, WHO HAS THE TASK OF PREPARING POSITION PAPERS FOR MEXDEL, HAS INDICATED HE FEELS OBLIGED TO EMPHASIZE AREAS OF FACTUAL DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN OUR SIDE AND THEIRS--PARTICULARLY STATISTICS PUT OUT BY INS AND GENERAL CHAPMAN ON NUMBERS OF ILLEGALS IN U.S. AND THEIR IMPACT ON U.S. ECONOMY(BUSTAMANTE ARGUES THAT CHAPMAN FIGURES ARE VASTLY INFLATED, UNRELIABLE, AND ALARMIST).

2. WE HAVE SOUGHT ON EVERY AVAILABLE OCCASION TO INDICATE TO MEXICANS THAT SUCH A CONFRONTATIONAL APPROACH TO APRIL MEETING WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE FROM OUR STANDPOINT, TENDING ONLY TO EXACERBATE CERTAIN ANTAGONISTIC ATTITUDES ON BOTH SIDES. TO THE CONTRARY, WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT U.S. DEL WOULD APPROACH APRIL MEETINGS WITH OPEN MINDS, HOPEFUL OF AVOIDING RECRIMINATORY FIREWORKS AND OF LAYING BASIS
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FOR DEALING WITH PROBLEM AS ONE WHICH AFFECTED BOTH U.S.

AND MEXICAN INTERESTS AND REQUIRED JOINT EFFORTS OVER LONG TERM. BUSTAMANTE, AT LEAST, SHOWED SOME INTEREST IN THIS ARGUMENT EARLIER BUT HAS MORE RECENTLY TOLD US MEXICANS FELT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO "SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT" ON A NUMBER OF POINTS REAISED BY CHAPMAN.

3. I HAD OCCASION THIS MORNING TO CALL ON FONSEC GARCIA ROBLES ON SEVERAL MATTERS, AND I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO MENTION TO HIM OUR INTEREST IN A SUCCESSFUL MEETING BETWEEN OUR TWO MIGRANT WORKER COMMISSIONS. I COMMENTED THAT I HOPED MEETINGS WOULD BE CONSTRUCTIVE IN CHARACTER AND THAT RECRIMINATIONS COULD BE AVOIDED INsofar AS POSSIBLE. I NOTED TOO THAT WE HAD HEARD MEMBERS OF MEXICAN COMMISSION WERE AGITATED BY WHAT THEY REGARDED AS UNSUBSTANTIATED AND MISLEADING RHETORIC FROM U.S. OFFICIALS. I SAID I HOPED MEXDEL WOULD NOT FEEL IT NECESSARY TO TRADE CHARGE FOR CHARGE, INASMUCHAS THERE WERE MANY POINTS OF VIEW WITHIN USG ON CHARACTER AND IMPACT OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION, NOT ALL OF WHICH VIEWED THE PHENOMENON AS AN UNMITIGATED EVIL. I ASSURED HIM OF U.S. DEL'S WILLINGNESS TO APPROACH THE PROBLEM WITH OPEN MINDS, AND HE ASSURED ME IN RETURN THAT HE WOULD INSTRUCT MEXDEL TO ENGAGE US IN A SIMILAR SPIRIT.

4. COMMENT: GARCIA ROBLES AND HIS "NEW TEAM" AT THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT ARE TAKING SPECIAL INTEREST IN ILLEGAL ALIEN PROBLEM. UNDERSECRETARY CASTANEDA, DIRECTOR IN CHIEF ANTONIO GONZALEZ DE LEON, AND OTHERS OF THE OLD GARCIA ROBLES CLIQUE HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY AND HAVE TAKEN THE BALL AWAY FROM THOSE PREVIOUSLY INVOLVED AT FONSEC. AS A CONSEQUENCE, WE MAY BE FACED NOT ONLY WITH A NEW TEAM BUT WITH A NEW BALL GAME AT APRIL MEETING, BUT WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY SIGNS THAT THEY ARE GIVING THE MATTER SERIOUS HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION. WHETHER THIS MEANS MORE OR LESS CONFRONTATION IN APRIL REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

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